

EDITORIAL NOTE

As explorers of the past, historians gather collections of evidence and employ diverse theoretical approaches to construct a possible narrative of the past. Evidence found in the archives often reflect contemporary ideas of gender, race, and class dynamics and as a result, history has favoured prominent white men as the protagonists of change over time. Women's history, as a field, gained traction and a presence in North American universities as a result of the women's activism in the post World War II period. Since then, scholars debate the approaches and challenges to unearthing the roles and experiences of women in history.

Authors in this issue of Left History complicate models of women's history that simply "add women and stir." Instead, their work unfolds narratives and analyses the intellectual, economic, and community history that is both feminist and complex in breadth. As Joan Scott argued in her groundbreaking work, gender is a "constitutive element of social relationships...and a primary way of signifying relationships of power."¹ Scott's definition of gender is particularly useful lens to frame these articles since they all feature working or middle class women of European descent.

Brian Thorn's "Women Are Truly Wonderful in their Ingenuity: Radical Housewives and Consumer Protest During the Cold War Era," looks at the ways in which women in the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) organized and participated in consumer protests and led post-war debates over the price of essential goods. Featured prominently in Thorn's argument is Mildred MacLeod, a social democrat and writer for the *CCF News*. MacLeod situated women as Canada's maternal leaders at the centre of post-war debates on inflation and the deregulation of food prices. With this position, MacLeod sought to empower women and encourage them to engage in public protest to reduce food prices. This paper not only speaks to the intersection of feminist political economy and post-war social history in Canada, but it also deconstructs the layers of "maternal" feminism in relation to histories of women's activism and consumption in post-war Canada.

Kent Worchester's "Third Camp Politics: An Interview with Phyllis and Julius Jacobson" is a micro-history of left wing intellectualism and community organizing in New York City from the mid-1930s. Working during the Great Depression, and being critical of both the U.S.S.R. and American style Democratic Liberalism, the Jacobsons developed an anti-authoritarian brand of Marxist ideology. In addition to publishing books, founding and editing *New Politics* in the 1960s, the Jacobsons remained committed to dispensing informa-

tion and encouraging public discussions by writing blogs and managing an Internet presence to express their socio-political views. The interview shares the personal reflections of Phyllis and Julius Jacobson and the influence of their upbringings on their community work. Worchester's analysis highlights the intersections of class, ethnicity, gender, and politics.

Milen Jissov's "Evil in the Subtext" and Alban Bargain's review essay of *Premières mesures révolutionnaires*, complicate existing philosophical and intellectual debates surrounding socialism and capitalism in the twentieth century world. While Bargain highlights the critical perspective of the French radical Left and outlines the anti-authoritarian form of socialism advocated by authors Eric Hazan and Kamo, Jissov rethinks Hannah Arendt's analysis of the Eichmann trial and reframes her final conclusion as an unintentional critique of capitalism.

Though histories have been dominated by "great white men narrative," these authors explore the participation of women in public debates in economic, political, and philosophical fields. As the field of women's history continues to develop, we observe the changes to scholarship. As historians engage with methods and theories from women and gender studies, political science, anthropology, Indigenous studies and sociology, we continue to see narratives that complicate popular histories of people, places, and time periods.

Left History would like to thank Mathieu Brûlé, for his work as an editor for the past two years. Brûlé's expertise, particularly on LGBT and labour issues have been invaluable to the journal. Left History would like to introduce some new members to the editorial board. Welcome to editors Carly Simpson, Abril Liberatori, and Assistant Book Review Editor Sara Farhan.

NOTES

¹ Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" *The American Historical Review* Vol. 91 No. 5 (1986), 1067.